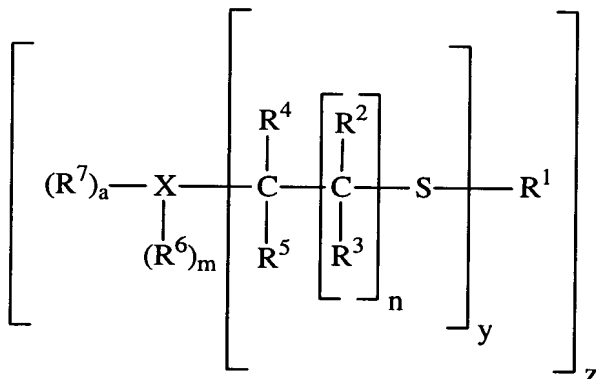


AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS:

1-72. (cancelled)

73. (new) A polymeric composition comprising:

- (a) a polymer component comprising a polymer normally susceptible to heat-induced deterioration,
- (b) degradation products of a blocked mercaptan present during processing of said polymeric composition at an elevated temperature, wherein said degradation products comprise a free mercaptan, and wherein said blocked mercaptan has the structure:



wherein:

a is 0 or 1, m and n are 0 or 1; y = 1 to 4; when y=1, z is 1 to 4; and when y is more than 1, z is 1;

R¹ is an alkoxycarbonylalkyl, alkoxycarbonylalkylenyl, hydroxyalkoxycarbonylalkyl, hydroxy(polyalkoxy)carbonylalkyl, alkoxy(polyalkoxy)carbonylalkyl, mercaptoalkoxycarbonylalkyl, mercaptoalkoxycarbonylalkylenyl, or alkylcarbonyloxy(polyalkoxy)carbonylalkyl radical having from 1 to 22 carbon atoms;

R², R³, R⁴, R⁵, R⁶, and R⁷ are independently hydrogen, a hydroxyl, mercapto, acyl, alkyl, alkylenyl, aryl, haloaryl, alkaryl, aralkyl, hydroxyalkyl, mercaptoalkyl, hydroxyaryl, alkoxyaryl, alkoxyhydroxyaryl, mercaptoalkylenyl, mercaptoalkoxycarbonylalkylenyl, hydroxyaryl, arylcarbonyl, mercaptoaryl, carboxyalkyl, or carboxyaryl radical having from 1 to 22 carbon atoms; and

X is aryl, haloaryl, alkaryl, hydroxyaryl, dihydroxyaryl, aralkyl, alkoxyaryl, arylcycloalkyl, or a heteroatom;

with the option that, when a is 1 and m is 0, one of the R³ and R⁵ radicals joins with R⁷ and X to form a heterocyclic moiety with X as a heteroatom selected from the group consisting of: oxygen and sulfur; with the further option that, when m is 1, R⁶ and R⁷ form a heterocyclic moiety in conjunction with X as a nitrogen atom; with the proviso that, when R⁶ is not a hydroxyl or mercapto, z is 1;

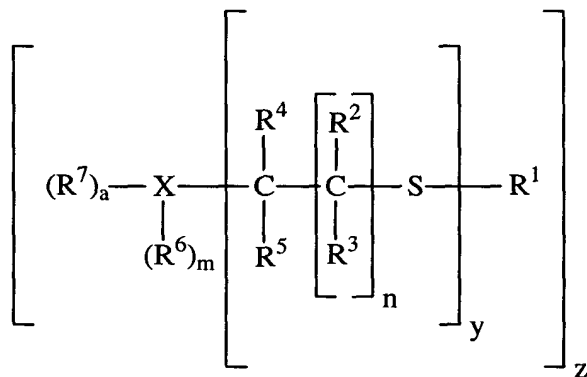
- (c) a mono-organotin compound or mixture of mono-organotin compounds; and
- (d) optionally, a diorganotin compound or mixture of diorganotin compounds.

74. (new) The composition of claim 73 wherein the sum of the amounts of said ingredients (b), (c), and (d) is from about 0.2 to about 10 parts by weight per 100 parts by weight of said polymeric component (a).

75. (new) The composition of claim 73 wherein X is oxygen, m is 0, R⁵ and R⁷ form a heterocyclic moiety in conjunction with X, and n is 0.

76. (new) The composition of claim 73 wherein R¹ is alkoxycarbonylalkyl.

77. (new) The composition of claim 73 wherein said polymer normally susceptible to heat-induced deterioration comprises a halogen-containing polymer.
78. (new) The composition of claim 77 wherein said halogen-containing polymer comprises a vinyl chloride polymer.
79. (new) A composition for stabilizing PVC consisting essentially of
(a) a latent mercaptan having the formula



wherein:

a is 0 or 1, m and n are 0 or 1; y = 1 to 4; when y=1, z is 1 to 4; and when y is more than 1, z is 1;

R¹ is an alkoxycarbonylalkyl, alkoxycarbonylalkylenyl, hydroxyalkoxycarbonylalkyl, hydroxy(polyalkoxy)carbonylalkyl, alkoxy(polyalkoxy)carbonylalkyl, mercaptoalkoxycarbonylalkyl, mercaptoalkoxycarbonylalkylenyl, alkylcarbonyloxy(polyalkoxy)carbonylalkyl radical having from 1 to 22 carbon atoms;

R², R³, R⁴, R⁵, R⁶, and R⁷ are independently hydrogen, a hydroxyl, mercapto, acyl, alkyl, alkylenyl, aryl, haloaryl, alkaryl, aralkyl, hydroxyalkyl, mercaptoalkyl, hydroxyaryl, alkoxyaryl,

alkoxyhydroxyaryl, mercaptoalkylenyl,
mercaptoalkoxycarbonylalkylenyl, hydroxyaryl, arylcarbonyl,
mercaptoaryl, carboxyalkyl, or carboxyaryl radical having from 1 to
22 carbon atoms; and

X is aryl, haloaryl, alkaryl, hydroxyaryl, dihydroxyaryl, aralkyl,
alkoxyaryl, arylcycloalkyl, or a heteroatom;

with the option that, when a is 1 and m is 0, one of the R³ and R⁵
radicals joins with R⁷ and X to form a heterocyclic moiety with X as a
heteroatom selected from the group consisting of: oxygen and sulfur;
with the further option that, when m is 1, R⁶ and R⁷ form a
heterocyclic moiety in conjunction with X as a nitrogen atom;
with the proviso that, when R⁶ is not a hydroxyl or mercapto, z is 1;

- (b) a mono-organotin compound or mixture of mono-organotin
compounds; and
- (c) optionally, a diorganotin compound or mixture of diorganotin
compounds.

80. (new) The composition of claim 79 wherein the amount of said latent
mercaptan (a) is from about 10% to about 100% by weight based on the
total weight of said composition for stabilizing PVC.

81. (new) The composition of claim 79 wherein X is oxygen, m is 0, R⁵ and R⁷
form a heterocyclic moiety in conjunction with X, and n is 0.

82. (new) The composition of claim 79 wherein R¹ is alkoxycarbonylalkyl.